

The Devil in the Dark by TheDinosaurNerd

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Summary:

1987. In a city far from Hawkins, Indiana, a spate of horrific murders and missing persons is the result of a single, predatory creature, who has claimed the entire city as its hunting ground.

or

Another Demogorgon emerges in a more urban setting.

1. A Killing

It wasn't quiet. It never was; the roads were always busy with traffic, and the sound of sirens was not uncommon. The streets were lined by tiny shops, outdated strip malls, fast food restaurants, and the occasional movie theater, and the ground was littered by all manner of trash. This part of the city was not bad at a glance, but a closer look would reveal it to be grimy as all hell.

Tonight was a night like any other. The street lights cast a dim, orange glow onto the sidewalk, combined with the bright lights of passing cars. One man found himself strolling down the sidewalk, kicking discarded newspapers and abandoned bottles around. As he walked, a strange sound reached his ears. There was a low growling mixed in with a repulsive wet sound. Driven by curiosity and poor judgement, he followed the sound down an alley behind a 7-Eleven. The alley reeked of death. He rounded the corner behind the store and stopped, a horrifying sight dimly lit by a flickering lamp nearby.

A pale figure was hunched over something, breathing heavily. It had leathery skin, and its face seemed to be moving in a way that the man did not comprehend. Below the figure, a person lay propped against the wall of the store; their torso seemingly opened and emptied out. Clawed hands held the corpse in place as the figure's strange head went to work. The whole scene was painted with a sickening red. The man stood there in shock, watching, before he regained some common sense and tried to back away. His foot nudged a discarded glass bottle, which rolled around on the ground before bumping into a wall, making a quiet sound. The pale figure suddenly stopped its movements and fell silent, before raising its head towards the man. Saliva and blood dripped onto the ground from the five petals of its face. The man could now clearly see the innards on which the creature was feasting.

"Fuck."

He turned and ran. He ran until he could barely breathe, his legs on fire. He stumbled into the parking lot of some strip mall and hid between cars. He leaned out to watch the direction he had come from, waiting for that... *thing* to round the corner looking for him.

Then, he heard the guttural croaking behind him, turned, and screamed.

Notes for the Chapter:

Comments are welcome.

2. Crime Scene

Police chief Sam Bennings knew it was going to be a bad day when his police cruiser pulled up near the crime scene, and he saw one of his best deputies stumble out of an alleyway looking as if she was going to vomit. He got out of the car and walked over as she leaned against a wall and coughed. "Jesus, Crawford, you alright?" he asked. She nodded and ran a hand through her hair. He looked down the alley where he could see a few officers standing with similar looks of disgust on their faces. He walked down the alley towards them, wondering what kind of homicide could possibly get that kind of reaction. Then, he rounded the corner.

"Oh, Jesus Christ. Fuck." Bennings had to turn away for a moment after he first saw it. Police tape surrounded the body, with a photographer taking detailed photos of the scene. The body had been more or less disemboweled. All of the officers present looked sickly, and the only person brave enough to approach the corpse was Copper, a doctor and Bennings' close friend.

"Well, Copper? What the hell happened here?"

The doctor groaned. "To be honest, I'm not sure. This almost looks like an animal attack, but no animal could do this kind of damage. And besides, the body seems partially eaten."

"Eaten?"

The doctor didn't respond. Bennings nodded and turned back down the alley. Crawford was still standing by the street, looking pale.

"Crawford, you sure you're alright?"

She nodded. "Yeah. I don't think I can go back down there, though."

"Yeah, no kidding. Sometime I wonder why you stick with this job."

Crawford looked away. "Heh. Didn't I tell you about my-"

It was at that moment that Bennings' radio clicked.

“Chief, you there? We’ve got another report. Somebody’s car got screwed up, and apparently there’s blood at the scene. I know you’re busy with the homicide case, but—

“I’m on it. Where is it?”

“Actually, it’s just down the street from the homicide. Interesting coincidence, huh?”

Bennings put away the radio and started down the sidewalk, motioning Crawford to follow him. It was a conveniently short walk, and they came up to a strip mall parking lot. There was one officer standing by the scene, taking down notes. One car seemed to have suffered some massive force from one side, and there was blood all over the floor and the side of the vehicle. Bennings turned to the officer.

“Any witnesses?”

“Yeah, a few people heard a scream at around 11:00 last night. Nobody saw anything, though.”

Bennings nodded. He crouched down by the car and looked around. There was a strong metallic smell in the air, and he had to pinch his nose to even get close. Something caught his eye from under the car, and he reached under to grab it. It was a driver’s license. He looked at it for a moment, then showed it to Crawford.

“One John Ratchett. Looks like we have a lead.”

Crawford took the card. “Maybe, but this investigation will probably have to wait until that homicide gets cleared up.”

Bennings sighed. She was right, of course. This case wouldn’t be anywhere near as important as the actual dead body just down the street. In any case, he’d keep an eye out for any related info. It really was weird that the two scenes existed less than a minute away from each other.

Interesting coincidence, indeed.

3. The Impossible Murder

Bennings sat in his office, waiting. Copper would be wrapping up his autopsy soon, and he was hoping it would provide some insight to the horrific death. Crawford ended up having to take the day off. She was a great deputy, but it was no secret she was kinda squeamish. Bennings had tried to make something out of the notes and photographs from the crime scene, but he was far too distracted, so he handed it off to the station's main intern. He was a good kid, pretty bright, but not the best around people.

"Ben, I've finished the autopsy," said Copper, walking into his office.

"Don't call me Ben. What did you find, doctor?"

"Well, the cause of death is fairly obvious; blood loss, shock, sudden trauma. It appears that the victim was essentially torn open by some massive exterior force. There's no evidence of the use of any conventional weapons. However, it would seem that teeth were involved."

"Human teeth?"

"No, it's unlike anything I've ever seen. I'm talking several rows of needle-sharp teeth. And, as I said, there is evidence of something eating the corpse. Whether the culprit killed the man or was simply a scavenger, I have no way of knowing."

Bennings ran a hand over his face. This was a real shit-show. "Alright, thanks, Copper." The doctor nodded and left the office. Bennings sighed. The past week had seen an unnatural number of missing-persons cases, even for this part of the city. And although murders weren't exactly common, everybody at this station had dealt with a few; nothing compared to the disemboweled corpse currently sitting in the morgue. Bennings was about to get up and go do *something* when his door opened again, and the intern walked in.

"Uh, good morning, chief, sir, I've been going over the stuff you gave me and, well..."

“And... what, Allsmore?”

“Well, it just doesn’t make sense. There’s no evidence of anyone or anything being there. Not even a single piece of displaced trash. Plus, parts of the body were missing, so the murderer would have had to carry something off with him, right? Well the thing is, there’s not a single blood trail leading away from the body. It’s almost like he was killed by a ghost, or something.”

Bennings sighed. What the actual hell? He knew he could trust the kid’s word, so there was something really off.

“And there’s another thing,” the intern started. “There’s this weird mark on the wall across from the body. It’s almost like a scar that healed itself. I don’t know what to make of that. I mean, I guess maybe it’s not important, but I dunno, I just thought-“

“Lyle, you’re rambling again.” That shut the kid up; Bennings rarely used his first name. The intern nodded slightly and backed out of the room. Bennings stood quietly in his office for a moment, before turning around and sitting down at his desk. What a shit-show.

Ed Chadwick knew what he was doing. He had been a detective for years. *Years*. He'd solved all kinds of cases. Homicides, mostly. He was damn good at his job. Today, he sat behind his desk in a room labeled *Homicide*, thinking. He respected Bennings, sure, but what the hell was he doing? He thought back to the conversation they'd had earlier that day.

"Look, Ed, I've already got enough people working on this case as it is. You handle the missing persons, alright?"

"Chief, this is the most gruesome murder we've had in years. I want to work this one."

"Ed, come on. I've got this one. Didn't you say you could use some time to relax?"

Ed had sighed. The chief had him there, for sure. Damn.

That night, Bennings drove back to his tiny, shitty apartment. The place was as dirty as the city itself. He had managed to clean the place up a bit over the past few months, and he'd even managed to stay out of his emergency alcohol reserve. But in any case, it was still a shithole. He was planning for a night of TV and trying to ignore the horrific murder of the day. He put away his police uniform, turned on the TV, and collapsed onto the couch.

Halfway across the city, a middle-aged woman desperately bandaged her bleeding leg. The room she was in was littered with empty bottles, and she herself had a revolver in her hand. The lights began to flicker, which was not usually alarming, but she knew what was coming. She saw what had happened to the poor bastard two rooms down. The lights were flickering violently now, as she finished wrapping up her leg. She stood and held her revolver in front of her, slowly spinning in a circle, expecting the threat to come from any direction.

She did not, however, expect it to come from below her. The floor opened up and the five petals lunged out, wrapping around her leg. She screamed and pointed the revolver down, firing into the creature's back. The thing roared, and a clawed hand burst out of the floor and went straight into her abdomen. The woman's shirt began to turn red, and she dropped the revolver. The creature whipped its head away, violently separating her leg from her body and tossing it across the room. The five petals then moved towards the woman's head as the creature pulled her into the gaping maw in the floor. The interdimensional wound began to heal itself as the monster returned to its world to feed, leaving only blood, a discarded revolver, and a severed limb as signs of what had happened.

Notes for the Chapter:

Comments are welcome.

4. Suspicion

Jesus H. Christ.

The apartment room was a mess, a real mess. There were blood stains all over the damn place, and there was an abandoned revolver lying on the ground. They had recovered one shell casing by the time Bennings arrived at the scene. Oh, and yeah, there was a severed leg just sitting in the corner.

“Good god,” said Copper, as he walked into the room. He grimaced as he kneeled down by the stray limb to do... whatever it is he does. Bennings never bothered to find out, really.

“Well, Sam, it’s just the same as the other body. Some violent force with teeth just straight-up ripped the victim’s leg off.”

Bennings groaned. Great, they had a leg. A fucking leg. Where the *hell* was the rest of the body? What the hell happened in this room?

“Y’know what, Copper, can you handle this for a second? I’m gonna go check out the other room.”

Bennings left the ruined apartment and went two doors down, where another room was marked off by police tape. Crawford stood inside, clearly struggling to stay composed. The room was also a mess, and the furniture looked like a tornado had come through. Again, there was blood all over the damn place. Unlike the other apartment, however, there was no body, no body parts, nothing. Just a shit ton of blood.

“It’s a real fucking mess in here,” said Crawford. “What the hell is going on, Bennings?”

Bennings shrugged. Hell if he knew. “Something bad,” he finally said.

The investigation did not last very long. There was a minimal amount of evidence to collect, so it wasn’t long before Bennings was walking back into the police station. Lyle Allsmore was on the phone,

and his eyes widened when Bennings walked in.

“Yeah, look, I gotta go, kid. See you later,” he said into the phone, as he placed it back down. Bennings motioned for Allsmore to follow him into his office. Once they were inside, Bennings placed the information from the new case on his desk. “Come on, kid, we’ve gotta sort this shit out.”

Allsmore nodded and walked over to the desk. He picked up some of the photographs and started going through them. Bennings picked up the notes when the intern spoke.

“Wait, chief, hold on.” He pulled out one of the photos and handed it to Bennings. “You see that on, uh, on the floor? It’s the same mark that was at the homicide scene. On the wall, remember? And, uh...” he grabbed the photos from the second apartment. “See, there it is again. Like a scar. Bit much to be a damn coincidence, I would think. I mean, I dunno what it is, but-“

“Good eye, kid.”

Allsmore just nodded. Then, the phone rang. Bennings motioned for Allsmore to leave as he picked up the phone on his desk. “Hello?”

“Samuel Bennings. We need to talk.”

Bennings rolled his eyes. “Look, Janine, I don’t have time for your-“

“Dammit, man, you have to listen to me!”

Janine Waters was the local conspiracy theorist. She was smart, sure, but she was also a real nutjob. Bennings had to deal with her every week, calling about the supposed UFO that she had seen, or the insane government conspiracy to put mind-control chemicals in the damn peanut butter.

“Look, Bennings, I’ve got actual *proof* this time. I’ve got photos.”

“Alright, what do you got? I don’t have much time to deal with this shit.”

“I have reason to believe that there is some sort of predatory,

humanoid creature right here in the city. There's been rumors of some tall, faceless figure showing up in alleys and stuff, right? A friend of mine set up a camera out on her balcony and she caught something. Apparently, it killed a raccoon or something. She went down there and found that the thing had been killed by what looked to be needle-sharp teeth, and-

"Janine, I need you to get down to the station now."

"What? Just hold on a second, man, I need to-

"Janine, just get down here. *NOW.*" Bennings slammed the phone down.

Notes for the Chapter:

Comments are welcome.

5. Revelation

“Bennings, what’s this all about?”

Janine Waters had burst in through the doors of the police station and gone straight to Bennings’ office. She had with her a number of photographs. She sat down across from him at his desk, and slammed the photos down onto it.

“Janine. I think you’ve actually found something important here.”

Bennings saw Janine’s eyes widen behind her giant glasses. “Really? Holy shit, man, you’re kidding. There’s the photos I mentioned,” she said, pushing the images across his desk. He picked one up to see a tall, pale figure standing in the darkness. There was no visible face. He sat back in his chair and sighed. This was completely fucking insane.

“Janine, we’ve been dealing with a unnatural spike in homicides and missing-persons cases. I think that *this*—” he motioned to the photographs— “is responsible.”

Janine ran a hand through her hair. “Wow. Holy shit, man. Look, I gotta go, but keep me in the loop, yeah? Holy fucking shit.” She walked out the door and left the station with a look of awe on her face.

The station was mostly uneventful after that. Bennings locked the door to his office so he could think in private. This was insane. Fucking monsters. Jesus H. Christ.

Then, the phone rang. Bennings picked it up.

“Hello?”

“Uh, hi. Is this the police station?”

“Yeah, it is. What can I do for you?”

“Well, actually, I’d like to report a missing person. John Ratchett,

he's my brother. He's been missing for two days."

Shit.

Bennings wrapped up the call, trying to be as reassuring as possible. He lied about setting up a search for Ratchett, printing out some missing posters, so on. He knew what had happened to him by now.

God damn it.

Ed was analyzing the bulletin board in the main office of the station. The board was covered in missing posters. There were no leads, no witnesses, nothing. He'd been doing this job for decades; nothing like this had ever happened. He sighed and looked down at his hands; in one, he held his notebook, and in the other he held a mug of coffee. There were a handful of other officers around, working on various cases. Ed knew that this city had countless more problems than this recent spike in 'weird ass shit', as he called it. His eyes fell on Deputy Crawford, who was sitting at her desk and writing a report. Ed knew that she had been working with Bennings on the recent murder case. He walked over.

"Afternoon, deputy."

"Afternoon, detective."

"You got anything? Bennings won't tell me anything about this damn case."

The deputy shrugged. "I don't know. This case doesn't make a damn lick of sense."

Ed was about to respond when Bennings walked into the room. He marched over to the bulletin board and posted another poster. It read, 'MISSING: John Ratchett'.

Later that night, Lyle Allsmore exited the police station. Bennings had decided to stay behind for a few minutes, saying that he would lock the place up for the night (something that was usually Lyle's job). Allsmore climbed into his crappy old car and drove halfway

across the city to his tiny house. When he walked through the door, the TV was on, although he had turned it off when he left that morning. There was a small figure sitting on the couch. Lyle knew it wasn't either of his parents; they were never around.

"Hey, kid. What are you doing here?"

Lyle walked around to face the small, freckled, curly-haired boy sitting on his couch. The kid shrugged.

"Did your parents fight again?"

The kid didn't respond. Lyle looked over to the TV, which was playing some shitty sitcom. The kid hated sitcoms. "I couldn't find the remote," he said. Lyle nodded; he had hid it. He walked over to the seat in the corner and reached under it, grabbing the hidden remote. "Well, it's a good thing they're having a Star Trek marathon tonight," he said. At that, the kid's face brightened.

"Really?"

Lyle nodded and handed him the remote, and the kid smiled brightly as he flipped through the channels. Lyle walked into the kitchen, opened the freezer, and grabbed a tub of ice cream.

Crawford found herself walking home. It was a fairly long walk, but she didn't trust taxis, and the buses were too expensive. She envied the station's intern; sure, his car was a pile of shit, but at least he had a car.

The last few days had been like hell. Sure, the whole week was pretty damn bad, considering the rising number of missing people. But Christ, that first body... she hadn't expected something like that to happen when she signed up for this job. She knew to expect terrible things to happen, but this was a bit much.

Not that she'd ever consider quitting. She promised herself she'd be a police officer, that she'd protect the innocent. Ever since what happened to her sister-

Don't think about that. Not now. You need to focus, she thought. She

sighed as she tried to shake the thoughts from her head.

Crawford pulled out a cigarette and her lighter. What a week.

Bennings had to take a walk. He didn't want to go back to his apartment, and the police station was getting stuffy. He decided to instead walk aimlessly around the city. The night was cold, and the city was unusually quiet. Bennings pulled out a cigarette, and was about to light it.

There was a gunshot.

Bennings looked up and put away his lighter, instead reaching for his pistol. There didn't seem to be anyone else around. Bennings moved in the direction of the sound, when there was another gunshot followed by a loud scream. Bennings broke into a run, and found himself in an alley. A nearby light was flickering aggressively.

A man lay bleeding on the ground. He coughed as he struggled to get up. When he heard Bennings running towards him, he looked up and yelled.

“HELP!”

Suddenly, something started pulling the man by his legs with massive force. He disappeared into a wall, leaving behind a trail of blood. Benning ran up to find a massive hole in the side of the wall, lined with some disgusting residue. He looked in to see a tall, pale figure looming over its still-struggling victim, who was screaming. The creature raised one of its clawed hands into the air, before bringing it down into the man's side. He screamed again. Bennings aimed for the creature's head and fired, and the creature looked up to face him. Bennings noticed with shock that the creature had no face. He also saw that the gaping hole had begun to shrink, as if to seal the gate that the creature had created. Bennings fired again, and watched in horror as the creature's face opened up into five petals, lined with rows of needle-sharp teeth. The monster roared at him as the gate sealed.

Bennings ran.

Notes for the Chapter:

Comments are welcome.

6. Bennings' Case

Copper pushed open the doors of the police station and walked past the front desk into the main office. It was damn early, so the station was still fairly quiet. Ed Chadwick was sitting on one of the couches, sipping from his mug of coffee.

"Morning, Ed," he said.

The detective nodded at him.

"You seen Bennings?"

"He's in his office, I think. He was already here when I showed up."

Copper muttered a thanks and walked down the hall to the chief's office. The door was closed, and Copper knocked. There was no response. Copper opened the door and entered the office, where Bennings sat in silence behind his desk. He looked like shit; he clearly hadn't slept all night. Copper marched over to him, and noticed that his hands were shaking.

"Jesus, Sam, what the hell happened?"

Bennings looked up, and Copper felt as if he was staring straight into his soul. "Neil," he said, causing Copper to raise an eyebrow. Bennings never used his first name, even though they'd been friends for years. He never used anyone's first name.

"What happened?" he asked again.

Bennings swallowed. "They say there's no devil, Neil, but there is. Straight out of hell, I... I saw it."

Gwen Crawford approached the doors to the police station. The last few days had been rough; she had experience with murder cases, but Christ. She paused at the sound of a car pulling up in the station's parking lot.

"Oh, uh, hey, deputy," said Lyle Allsmore, climbing out of his car. It

was a real pile of junk.

“Christ, kid, you gotta ditch that car.”

The intern only shrugged. He looked tired. She couldn't blame him; they were all tired. The two walked into the station, past the front desk, and into the main office, to find Copper pacing around the main room, clearly stressed. A few other officers were milling about the station, talking quietly and working.

“Doc, what's up?” asked Crawford.

“Something's happened to Bennings. He won't talk to me. Said something about the devil when I came in, and he hasn't spoken since. I think he's been here all night.”

The three moved into Bennings' office, and the chief snapped his head up to look at them as they entered.

“Good, you're all here. We've got a problem.” He picked up a pile of photographs and handed them to Copper. The others gathered around him to look at the photos.

“What the hell?” said Crawford. The three were looking at a photo of a tall, faceless figure standing in a dark alley.

“Janine Waters handed these to me the other day. I thought she might be on to something, but then shit hit the fan last night. I saw this,” said Bennings, pointing to the photographs. He pulled out another set of photographs, which appeared to be of a basic crime scene. There was an area of alleyway that had been sectioned off with police tape. On the ground was a massive blood stain, as if something had been dragged. The thing is, it looked almost as if it was dragged *through the wall*.

“I was there when this happened,” said Bennings. “I saw that... *thing* kill someone. It's the same thing that's responsible for all the murders and missing-persons cases we've been dealing with. I got another phone call reporting a missing person yesterday; one John Ratchett.”

Crawford's eyes widened at that.

“Okay, let’s say that this monster of yours is real. Where are its teeth? That’s the one thing that’s been connecting these cases.”

“That’s the thing,” said Bennings, pulling out a piece of paper and a pencil. He began to furiously sketch something down. When he was finished, he lifted the paper to show them. It was a crude drawing of a figure with a flower-like head, each of the five petals covered in needle-sharp teeth.

“You see, its entire face is a mouth. So, when its mouth is closed-“

“It looks like it doesn’t have a face,” Crawford finished.

Bennings nodded. He then turned to Allsmore. “And then, there’s the strange marks you pointed out. That thing, it... ripped a hole in the wall. But the thing is, it didn’t end up on the other side of the wall. It was somewhere totally else. I can’t explain it; it was like it opened a door straight to hell.”

Allsmore thought for a moment. “So, uh, this door, like, closed itself, right? That’s what’s leaving the marks. It’s like a, uh, a scar. A wound.”

“Exactly. I can’t really figure it out. But... we need to figure it out, if we want any chance of fighting this thing.”

Allsmore thought again. “I, uh, I know someone. He’s smart, and he, well, he probably knows about this type of thing. I mean, the kid’s only, like, thirteen, but-“

“He’s a *kid*? No way. There’s no way we can get a fucking kid involved in this.”

“Well, do you have any better ideas? None of us are smart enough to figure this out. Trust me, this kid’s a genius. Besides, uh, there’s nothing to say we have to put him in danger.”

Bennings sighed. He hated to admit, the intern was right. If this kid was as smart as he said, he would be valuable.

“Well, what about the kid’s parents?”

Allsmore scoffed. "They wouldn't care. Bastards hardly give a shit about their own son."

Bennings thought for a moment. Shit.

"Alright. You think you can get the kid down here?"

Allsmore nodded. "I can go get him now." He turned and walked out the door.

Ed was sitting behind his desk when the station's intern walked past the door. Ed got up and looked out, curious. He saw the kid walk out of the main office, heading towards the exit. Weird. The kid usually just sat around the station when he had nothing to do. Maybe Bennings had put him up to something. Maybe something to do with the homicides.

Ed hoped that someone was going to tell him what the hell was going on.

Notes for the Chapter:

Comments are welcome.

7. The Flea and the Acrobat

“Hey, Elliot?” Lyle Allsmore quietly walked into his house, looking for his friend. The TV was still on. Lyle walked around to find Elliot passed out on his couch. He gently shook the kid awake. Elliot groaned and rubbed his eyes.

“Is it morning already?”

Lyle chuckled and nodded. “Afraid so, kid. Look, I need your help. This is really important.”

Elliot frowned at him. Lyle looked really serious, almost... scared? Had he ever seen Lyle scared before?

“Help with what?”

The car pulled up into the parking lot of the police station.

“Lyle? Why are we at the police station?”

Lyle didn’t respond. The two kids hopped out of the car and walked into the station. Elliot followed his friend through the station, thankful that it wasn’t crowded, until they walked into the chief’s office. There were three people sitting in chairs around the room.

“Is this him?” asked one of them. Lyle nodded. The man turned to Elliot. “Hey there, kid. I’m Bennings, and this is Copper and Crawford.” The man extended his arm, and Elliot nervously shook his hand. The two others in the room nodded at him in greeting.

“Um... I’m Elliot. I’m sorry, but... what am I doing here?”

Bennings turned around and walked to his desk. “Well, Elliot, we need your help.” He picked up a photograph and handed it to the kid. “We have reason to believe that there’s an... unknown creature going around the city.”

Elliot looked at the photograph, and his eyes widened. There was a monster, a real *monster*, standing there. “Holy shit.”

Bennings raised his eyebrows.

“So, what is this thing? I mean, like, seriously, what the hell?” asked Elliot, as he climbed up into one of the chairs.

“Well, it seems to be predatory. And it seems to be able to open up holes in the walls, and-“

“Like the Devil in the Dark.”

“What?”

“Oh, it’s, uh, it’s an episode of Star Trek about this alien that’s based on silicon instead of carbon, so it can move through walls as easy as we move through air, and- you know what, it doesn’t matter. You were saying?”

Bennings barely comprehended the tangent that this kid just went on. “Well, it seems to be able to open up holes that lead to... someplace else. I don’t know how to describe it. It’s like another world. I haven’t seen much of it, but it wasn’t normal.”

Elliot thought for a moment. “It sounds like an alternate dimension. Basically, there’s a theory that there are other planes of existence, which have infinite variations on the universe we exist in. They technically exist in the same space, but since they’re on separate planes of existence, we can’t interact with them. It sounds like the monster can travel between dimensions.”

The room was silent. “Um... what?” said Crawford.

Elliot looked around the room, taking a moment to realize that the others had no idea what he had just said. He sighed and grabbed a piece of paper and a pen.

“Alright, here’s a common explanation. My old science teacher told me about this. So, say there’s a tightrope.” He drew a line across the paper. “There’s an acrobat on the tightrope. This guy can move forwards and backwards on top of the rope, right? But he can’t go on the sides or bottom of the rope.” He drew a stick figure on top of the line. “In this analogy, we are the acrobat, and the top of the rope is our world, right?” The adults all nodded. “But let’s say there’s also a

flea on the tightrope.” He drew a small dot on the line. “Now, the flea can move on the top of the rope, like the acrobat, but it can also crawl on the bottom of the rope. In this analogy, the flea is the monster, and the bottom of the rope is the dimension that you saw. Does that make sense?” Again, the others nodded.

“How do we get to this... alternate dimension?” asked Bennings.

Elliot shrugged. “We can’t. You’d need to have a massive amount of energy to open a gate, which we don’t. Whatever powers the monster has, we don’t have it.”

Bennings sighed. “Dammit.” He put his head in his hand.

“Why do you want to find this thing so much, anyways?”

Bennings didn’t seem to hear him. “There has to be a way to find this thing before it kills again, and-“

“Before it- what? Wait, has this monster been *eating* people?!”

“Look, kid, I shouldn’t have said that, I-“

“Yes, it has been eating people,” Copper cut in.

“Wha- Copper, you can’t just say that!”

“Sure I can, the kid deserves to know!”

Elliot had turned pale, and the two shut up when he got up and walked out of the room. “Shit. Shit!” he said as he walked out. “Shitting shit!”

After a short while, Elliot managed to calm down slightly, and was currently sleeping on the couch out in the main office. Ed had agreed to watch the kid while the others were busy. Said others were currently discussing their plans in Bennings' office.

“Look,” said Bennings. “We may not have a good way of finding this thing, but we know more than we did. Allsmore, I want you to keep an eye on that kid. We don’t know how that thing hunts, and we

can't afford to risk his life. The rest of you, be careful." The others nodded.

"This is a battle now. Our enemy could come from anywhere, and it could strike again at any moment. The whole city is its hunting ground."

Notes for the Chapter:

Unfortunately, progress on this story is likely going to slow down quite a bit from now on.

Comments are welcome.

8. A Moment's Respite

Notes for the Chapter:

So, I've made a few major changes to the previous chapters, to better convey the setting and to better develop the characters. I've even added a whole new character, so I'd advise going back and rereading the story. Thanks for reading!

The door to Bennings' apartment slammed open, and the tired man stumbled in. He threw the door closed behind him and locked it. He had a terrible headache that he'd managed to ignore for a while, but now it was killing him. He groaned as he stumbled over to his closet, trying to remember whether or not he still had any of those pain meds that Copper had prescribed to him for headaches. He did not. Damn. He walked over to his couch and collapsed onto it with a sigh. He switched the TV on and tried to relax for a moment. It wasn't working.

His eyes fell on the cupboard that contained his Emergency Alcohol Reserve. *'Sam, you've officially screwed over your liver. You're gonna need to stop drinking,'* Copper had said. Bennings stood up and opened the cupboard. There were several bottles of various liquors sitting inside. Bennings sighed as he started pulling them out and piling them onto the counter. He grabbed the last bottle and opened it, considering pouring a glass and getting drunk.

Then, an idea popped into his head. He turned the bottle over and started pouring its contents into the sink.

Bennings went down to the nearby gas station and bought a few cans of gasoline. He returned to his apartment and set the cans down on the counter next to the collection of empty liquor bottles, plus a number of strips of fabric harvested from his old shirts.

Hopefully, a good Molotov cocktail could kill that thing.

“So, do you want me to take you back home, or...”

Lyle looked over at the boy sitting next to him in the car. Elliot looked tired, but he managed to stay awake.

“No. I don’t wanna deal with them right now.”

Lyle nodded and looked back to the road. Elliot’s head rolled over to look out the window, at the orange streetlights rushing past.

Elliot flopped down onto Lyle’s couch. He sighed and sank into the cushions. Lyle ruffled the kid’s hair.

“You want anything to eat?”

Elliot mumbled something that vaguely sounded like ‘hot dog’.

“Well, I only have mac & cheese, so...”

“Just fuckin feed me, man. I need sustenance!” the kid yelled into the couch. Lyle rolled his eyes and walked into the kitchen.

Elliot was stuffing macaroni into his face faster than Lyle could comprehend. He would be afraid of the kid choking, but Elliot was a self-proclaimed ‘expert of food inhalation’.

“Sheesh, kid, you wanna slow down a bit?”

Elliot responded by flipping him off.

“That’s a bit... obscene.”

Elliot flipped him off again.

Lyle chuckled and ruffled the kid’s hair. Elliot was tempted to flip him off a third time, but he decided that eating was more important right now.

Crawford sighed. This was the day. She’d put this off for long

enough. She put out her cigarette and walked over to the phone. She made the call, not surprised when nobody picked up.

“Hey, uh, it’s Gwen. I know I haven’t called in a while. I’m sorry. It’s just... I’ve been working on this case, y’know? And I’m tired. I’m so damn tired. Things are getting weird around here, and I’m just... I’m just really tired. I never expected anything like this when I started this job.” She talked into the receiver for a while, until she felt her eyes grow heavy.

“Alright, look. I’m pretty damn tired, and I need to get some sleep. I love you, sis. Bye.”

Her sister, Lynn Crawford, had been murdered six years ago.

Elliot was passed out cold. The two had stayed up late watching cheesy old movies, eating popcorn and making fun of the shitty old films. The kid sure was a riot, more of a trashmouth than Lyle had ever been. Lyle was almost surprised that he had so much fun, considering the shit that’d been going on. He picked up the remote and turned off the TV, then looked over at the kid sleeping on the couch next to him.

Before he had fallen asleep, Elliot had said something. The kid was tired, probably delirious, talking nonsense. He had said, “Y’know, Lyle... you’re like the brother I never had. You’re my, eh, my favorite shithead.” He then flopped over, falling asleep in seconds.

Once he was sure Elliot was asleep, Lyle whispered, “You’re my favorite shithead, too, kid.”

“Dammit, Richard, I am tired of your SHIT!”

She couldn’t believe it. He’d cheated on her. The bastard.

“Look, Susan, it’s nothing, I swear-“

“Oh, it’s nothing. I suppose I’m just supposed to forget this ever happened, just move on with my life?”

“Susan, you’re overreacting.”

“Why, you-“

She punched him in the face. He cried out and stumbled back, as his nose started to bleed. Great. More blood. She’d accidentally cut her hand earlier while cutting vegetables, when her friend had called to tell her that she saw Richard with another woman.

“Susan, are you drunk?”

“Oh, what does that matter?” Maybe she’d had a few too many to drink, but that was irrelevant.

“Susan, do you even know where our son is?”

“What?”

“Where’s Elliot, Susan?”

“I don’t FUCKING care, you shitbag! He’s probably with that Allsmore kid! Don’t change the fucking subject!”

The lights flickered.

“Oh for fuck’s sake, Susan. You’re a mess. Can’t even keep track of your own son.”

“Oh, I’m a mess! He’s your son too, you utter fucking-“

The lights shut them both up. They were going crazy. This wasn’t a damn electrical problem. The two turned to the wall, as the wallpaper started to stretch. A pale, clawed hand tore through the wall.

“Oh, mother of Christ!”

The creature emerged from the wall, raising its head to face the two. Its head began to flower open, saliva dripping from its petals.

It had been too long since it had last fed.

Notes for the Chapter:

Comments are welcome.

9. Police Station Shootout

The morning light came in through the window. Elliot sat at Lyle's dining table, eating a bowl of cereal. The TV played quietly in the background. Elliot always liked the mornings. It was the only time that he knew his parents would be too tired to fight.

Lyle stumbled out of his room, rubbing his eyes. He made his way to the couch, where Elliot had slept last night. He wasn't there, and the TV was on, although Lyle turned it off before he went to sleep. He turned to the dining room, where the kid sat with a bowl of cereal.

"Morning, kid."

Elliot nodded at him, a faint smile on his face.

"I'm gonna have to take you back home, you know."

Elliot sighed. 'Alright. Just let me finish my cereal.'

Bennings piled the Molotovs into an old beer case and left his apartment, taking the case with him. He threw it into the passenger seat of his car and climbed into the driver seat. Bennings drove down the police station, grabbing the Molotovs as he exited the car. He barged into the station and walked through the main office, where Ed and Copper were talking quietly. When the doctor saw Bennings, he stood up.

"Hey chief, what's going on? Is everything al- is that beer?" Copper followed the man into his office as Bennings placed the case down on his desk.

"Dammit, Sam, I thought I told you to stop drinking..." He noticed the strips of fabric stuffed into the necks of the bottles.

"Molotov cocktails?"

Bennings nodded.

Copper was about to speak again when the chief's radio buzzed. He

grabbed it.

“Hello?” he said.

The person on the other end spoke. Copper couldn’t make it out.

“What? Allsmore, what are you-“

The person on the other end cut him off. Copper watched as Bennings’ eyes widened. He put the radio away and stood up.

“We have to go. Now.”

The ride was quiet. Lyle knew that Elliot wasn’t happy. He always hated going home. He couldn’t blame the kid.

The car approached Elliot’s house. It slowed to a stop in front of the old building, which really needed a new paint job. Lyle was about to unlock the car doors when he saw something on the window.

Was that... blood?

“Stay here.” Lyle opened his door and walked out. Elliot watched as he walked over to his front door and knocked a few times. Lyle stood on the porch for a few seconds, and then opened the door. Elliot hadn’t heard either of his parents invite him in. Lyle walked into the house, disappearing from Elliot’s view. What the hell was he doing?

A few minutes later, Lyle emerged from the house. His face was pale and he looked like he might throw up. He walked to the car, opened the door, and sank into the driver’s seat, a look of horror on his face.

“What happened?” asked Elliot, fearing the worst.

Lyle didn’t respond, and placed his head in his hands.

“WHAT HAPPENED?” he screamed.

Lyle reached over and opened the glove compartment, pulling out a radio that the police station had provided when he started his internship. He turned it on.

“Hello?” Bennings’ voice said over the radio.

“Chief,” he whispered, “We’ve got another one.”

“What? Allsmore, what are you-“

“673 Albrook Drive. Get down here.”

“Holy shit,” said Ed Chadwick. He’d seen his fair share of murder scenes, but damn. The room was chaotic, blood everywhere. It looked as if there had been two victims, and yet there was only one body.

The body itself looked almost like it was impaled. The poor bastard had been eviscerated. His face had been mauled, and was unrecognizable. Copper was currently inspecting the body, and several officers were collecting evidence and taking photos in the other rooms of the house. Ed looked away from the gruesome scene when Bennings entered the room. He grimaced at the sight.

“Chief, I’ve seen some shit, but... this is something else.”

Bennings nodded.

Gwen Crawford sat outside with Elliot, the poor kid. He was crying his eyes out. Sure, he had hated his parents, but...

She did her best to comfort him. She could tell it wasn’t helping, but someone had to try.

Ed walked into the house’s kitchen. An officer was taking photos of a countertop in the middle of the room.

“Is that blood?”

The officer nodded. “Looks like it. Don’t think it’s from... you know.”

Ed walked closer and analyzed the scene. There was a knife sitting on the counter, next to a pile of old vegetables. They must have been sitting there for a while. There was blood on the counter; not much,

but it was significant.

“Looks like someone cut their hand while they were chopping vegetables. Complete accident, probably,” said Ed. He was glad to see his detective skills were still intact.

It was night by the time Bennings and the others returned to the station. Lyle took Elliot back to his house. They both needed some rest. Now, Bennings was sitting quietly behind his desk, as usual.

There was a commotion out in the main office. Bennings frowned and got up, exiting his office and walking down the hall. Three officers had entered the main office. One of them was bleeding from his leg, with the two others supporting. Another officer hauled in a handcuffed man, leading him down the hallway towards the interrogation rooms.

“What the hell happened?” barked Bennings.

The wounded officer grinned. “I got shot!” he exclaimed.

“Why the *hell* are you not in a hospital?”

One of the other officers spoke up. “He wouldn’t let us take him. Stubborn son of a bitch.”

Bennings groaned. “Alright, get him to the infirmary.” The three officers exited the office. Bennings looked down at the blood that had ended up on the floor and sighed. Idiots. He walked back to his office and rubbed his eyes.

The lights flickered.

Bennings thought back to the most recent crime scene. There had to be something he was missing. What had drawn the creature to that house? What had drawn the creature to any of the victims?

Bennings looked up to the light on the ceiling. It was acting up, more than normal. He shrugged it off.

Bennings recalled something Ed mentioned to him. Someone had cut

their hand in the house, before it all went down. “It’s probably nothing,” he had said.

Ok, now the lights were getting on his nerves. Bennings looked out of his office to see that all the other lights were freaking out as well. The other officers looked around in annoyance and confusion.

Then, something hit him. When he was in the alley, when he saw that creature for the first time, there was a light nearby. It had been acting up, too. His eyes widened in realization.

Blood.

Blood.

Bennings rushed out into the main office, stopping at the puddle of blood on the floor. Of course. It could smell blood. Ed looked over at him, looking concerned.

“Chief? You alright?”

Bennings did not have time to respond when a scream echoed through the station, followed by gunshots.

“Shit!” yelled Ed. A handful of officers ran towards the sounds, pulling out their revolvers. They moved down the hallways of the station in the direction of the infirmary.

A headless body suddenly flew out of the room, ripping the door off of its hinges. The officers stopped in their tracks.

Ed swore as another medley of screams echoed from the other end of the building.

“Shit!”

“Shoot it!”

“What the fuck?!”

Then there were gunshots, mixed in with the screams. “Get to the

armory!” yelled Bennings, as he moved towards his office. Ed turned around and headed in the direction of the armory, on the other end of the building from the infirmary. Various people were emerging from the offices, break rooms, and other various rooms of the building, their faces a mix of confusion of terror.

“What’s going on?”

“Is it terrorists?”

Ed reached the armory and threw the door open. He grabbed a shotgun and then started handing rifles and other large guns to the other officers. The station was quickly descending into chaos.

The first few officers were strewn about the hallway, the floor littered with their insides and the walls painted with their blood. The Demogorgon entered the first room it came to, tearing the door out and throwing it aside. The person inside was already armed, and started shooting. The bullets did not harm it, and it rapidly eviscerated the screaming human. It tore through the wall into the next room, where a group of officers were arming themselves. It impaled the nearest of them with its arm, and threw the man across the room into one of his fellow officers. The others began to fire upon the creature, which progressed unimpeded. It clawed the next person it reached, easily opening up the human’s torso, then it opened its flower-face. The Demogorgon grabbed the third person with its head, violently mauling the poor bastard with its teeth.

Bennings rushed into his office and grabbed the case of Molotovs. Copper entered the office after him.

“What the hell is going on?”

“We’re under attack.”

The newly-armed officers rounded the corner and entered the main office, Ed following behind them. A handful of officers rushed into the hallway that led down to the infirmary. Screams and gunshots

continued to echo from that direction. The newest group of officers stopped and aimed their weapons down the hall.

The wall was suddenly ripped open and the Demogorgon emerged, covered in glistening blood.

“Holy shit!”

“Open fire! OPEN FIRE!”

The hallway erupted into chaos as the rifles sprung to life, firing upon the demon. It roared and barged down the hallway, swiping its claws as soon as someone was in reach. The officer was nearly ripped in half, flying into the wall from the force of the attack.

“Oh fuck!”

“SHIT! SHIT!!”

Nearly everybody in the main office was now armed, guns raised. Ed had his shotgun, and Crawford was loading her pistol. The last people to head down the hallway were still screaming in terror.

Suddenly, a person flew down the hallway and into the opposite wall. Once the body hit the floor, Ed realized that their face was caved in. A single eyeball hung loosely from the gory skull.

“Oh, Christ!” someone yelled. Then, it entered the room. Ed’s eyes widened.

It was the devil itself.

The room erupted into gunfire, just like the rest of the station. The person closest to the Demogorgon was knocked to the ground as the creature attacked, and she screamed as its face flowered open and came down onto her chest. The others continued to fire. The creature looked up and roared, fresh flesh hanging from its teeth and blood dripping from its maw. Bennings lit one of his Molotovs and tossed it at the creature, and the scene went up in flames. The creature screamed in agony.

“Fall back!” yelled Bennings, and the people in the room dispersed, running in every direction. Many of them didn’t make it very far before being violently ripped apart. Ed ran down a hallway and turned into an empty office. The hallways were still filled with the sounds of carnage, gunfire, and death. Ed saw two officers run past his hiding place. “Wait, stop!” he tried to say, but they didn’t hear. He heard them scream. Shortly after, one of them came running back down the hall, now covered in blood. They looked back to find the creature right behind them. It swiped its claws upwards, tearing right through the person’s torso and skull, painting the ceiling with blood and flesh. The body fell backwards, and the demon progressed down the hall.

Ed swallowed and spun out of the office, raising his shotgun at the creature. “HEY!” he yelled, firing into its back before it had the chance to turn around. The Demogorgon spun around and roared at him. He fired again. The creature began to march down the hall towards him. Ed started backing away as he fired again. And again.

“DIE, MOTHERFUCKER!” he yelled.

Bennings and Copper had hid in Bennings’ office. They heard Ed scream from somewhere in the station. Dammit.

“Sam, what do we do?”

Bennings leaned out of the room and looked around. He didn’t see the creature anywhere, although he still heard it ripping people apart. Bennings turned back to Copper.

“The entrance is not that far. We can make a break for it.”

Copper nodded. The two exited the room, trying to stay low.

Crawford rushed around the corner, heading towards the armory. There were numerous people running around.

“What the hell is going on? I mean what the *hell* is going on?!”

“We’re under attack!”

“Come on, let’s go! Move it!”

“Fire! There’s a fire!”

“We need backup! Somebody call in some backup!”

Crawford looked back to see someone backing up, firing down the hallway. The creature stepped forward and grabbed the poor bastard by the neck. He struggled weakly against the monster’s grip. Someone fired at the Demogorgon’s head, and it roared in rage, eviscerating the man’s throat and moving down the hall. Crawford’s eyes widened and she ducked into a nearby break room, along with some other officers. Crawford slammed the door shut and everybody fell silent. There was more screaming outside the door, and then the wall was ripped open. Crawford was knocked down and a stray piece of debris struck her shoulder, ripping through her skin and sending her to the ground. The Demogorgon entered the room, and the room was suddenly filled with screaming and gunfire.

“Oh GOD!”

“No, no no-“

“BRING IT, YOU SON OF A BITCH!”

“Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee-“

The creature descended on the cornered humans, who pressed themselves against the far wall, trying to get as far away from it as possible. It moved past Crawford, who crawled out of the room and broke into a run as the Demogorgon devoured the others. She ran to the nearest exit and threw open the door, running into the night.

Bennings and Copper snuck through the main office, towards the entrance to the station. The fire still burned in the corner.

A roar sounded from the hallway, and the two spun around. The Demogorgon entered the room, dragging a corpse by the legs. It dropped the dead officer and began moving towards the men. Bennings quickly lit another Molotov and threw it at the creature, lighting it up.

“Come on, let’s go!”

Bennings and Copper ran past the front desk and into the front lobby, Bennings nearly slipping on the slick blood that painted the tile floor. There was a corpse that lay against the wall, nearly decapitated. Bennings resisted the urge to vomit and followed Copper to the entrance. The two rushed out the doors and to Bennings’ police cruiser. They quickly climbed in and Bennings started the car. He cast another glance back at the police station, blood splattered on the windows and smoke billowing out of the building. Then, the car pulled out of the parking lot and sped down the street.

Crawford ran. She ran until she reached her apartment. Her shoulder was bleeding heavily now. Crawford threw open the door and collapsed into the room, kicking the door closed behind her. She pulled herself up against the wall, grabbing her injured shoulder. In her other hand she clenched her revolver.

She sat there for a while, not even bothering to bandage up her wound. She couldn’t bring herself to do much of anything.

The lights flickered.

Crawford looked up at the light, as it began going out of control.

It had followed her.

She stood up and walked into the center of the room, and started slowly spinning in a circle, clenching her gun.

The wall was ripped open, the Demogorgon tearing a rift in reality. It was still hungry. Crawford raised her gun at the creature as its petals opened.

“Come on, motherfucker,” she spat, “LET’S DANCE!”

10. The Looming Threat

Notes for the Chapter:

I know it's been quite a while since I last updated this story. Hopefully I can get back into things now.

“Sam, slow down.”

The police cruiser careened down the road. Bennings was still shaken from the police station attack. At this point, he was barely paying attention to the road.

“Sam, listen to me.”

Copper sat next to Bennings, a look of concern on his face. There was blood on his shirt.

“Do you even know where you’re going?”

Bennings barely listened to him. He didn’t know where he was going; he didn’t know much of anything.

“Copper, I- SHIT!”

Bennings tried to slam on the brakes as the police cruiser approached the hardware store, but too late. The car careened through the front of the store, crashing through a counter and slamming into a shelf.

Bennings pushed open the car door and fell out onto the floor. He stumbled onto his feet and looked around. The car was completely screwed, the front practically caved in from the impact. Smoke rose from the hood; Bennings didn’t know much about cars, but he was pretty sure it was beyond saving now. Copper was still passed out in the passenger seat. The floor of the hardware store was covered in broken glass and wood, from where the car crashed into the building.

There was a sound from the other side of the car. Bennings turned to

see Copper climbing out of the car.

“Jesus, Sam, you nearly got us killed.”

Bennings ignored him. He continued looking around the store. It was empty, fortunately; closed for the night.

“Copper, is the radio still working?” asked Bennings.

Copper leaned into the car and checked the radio.

“Seems to be fine.”

Bennings walked over to the car and grabbed the radio.

“Allsmore, are you there? Over.”

No response.

“Allsmore, do you read me? Over.”

Again, nothing.

“Allsmore, are you there?”

Bennings waited a moment. He was about to give up when-

“Yeah, I read you. What’s going on?”

“Do you know the hardware store on Colfax?”

“Yeah, why?”

“Get down there. Bring the kid with you.”

Bennings switched the radio off before Allsmore could response.

The car pulled up to the hardware store quietly. Lyle’s eyes widened at the ruined storefront.

“What the hell?” he muttered.

Lyle parked the car and woke up Elliot. The two exited the car and walked into the store. Elliot looked around at the giant, gaping hole, and the crashed police cruiser.

“Holy fuck, what the hell happened here?” he asked.

Bennings raised an eyebrow, before turning to Lyle.

“We were attacked at the police station. As far as I know, we’re the only survivors.”

Lyle sighed. “Christ.” He shook his head. “So what now?”

Bennings grimaced. “We need weapons. Someone is going to have to go back to the police station. I can do it, but I can’t guarantee I’ll be coming back.”

The situation was grim. Lyle considered his options, before speaking up. “I’ll do it.”

“What?” everyone said at once.

“Bennings, you and Copper were just in a car crash. You’re in no condition to go back and risk your life. We don’t know where Crawford is, so that leaves me. I can do it.”

Bennings considered for a moment, and then nodded. “That’s the only way, I suppose,” he said as Lyle began to walk away. “Good luck, kid.”

Lyle’s rickety old car rolled to a stop in front of the abandoned police station. A low flicker behind one of the windows indicated a fire burning inside. Lyle swallowed as he grabbed his radio, exited the car, and quietly walked towards the entrance. He pushed open the door as quietly as possible, and snuck across the lobby towards the main office. He grimaced at the blood splattered all over the tile floor. As Lyle reached the main office, he turned on the radio.

“Alright, I’m in. Where are the weapons?”

“The armory is down the left hallway. You should be able to find it easily. You should also be able to pull some guns off the bodies.”

Lyle moved down the hallway towards the armory, checking the rooms and offices along the way for any bodies. There was blood everywhere, but he couldn’t find any corpses. The station was eerily silent, but for the sound of Lyle’s footsteps and the quiet crackling of a fire. Finally, Lyle reached the armory and grabbed all the remaining weapons. There were several revolvers, a few rifles, and a shotgun. He grabbed as many as he could carry, and was about to leave when he spotted a belt of grenades. He took it and ran through the police station, quickly reaching the entrance and running to his car. He dumped the guns into the truck and placed the grenades on the passenger seat. As Lyle climbed into the driver seat, the radio clicked on.

“Allsmore, did you get anything?”

“Yeah, but Bennings, get this. There aren’t any bodies.”

“What?”

“I didn’t find a single corpse in the entire station. Blood everywhere, but no bodies. Some of the bloodstains looked like something had been dragged.”

He turned off the radio and started the car.

Notes for the Chapter:

Comments are welcome.